

**Town of Brookline Override Study Committee
Municipal Services Subcommittee
Final Report**

The Municipal Subcommittee of the Brookline Override Study Committee (the “Subcommittee”) was tasked with reviewing municipal operations of the Town of Brookline (the “Town”) in order to determine whether there are operational efficiencies that could be achieved and/or service reductions that should be considered by the Override Study Committee (the “OSC”) that would reduce operational expenses of the Town and, as a result, reduce the size of any override or debt exclusion that would be needed to reduce the operating deficit of the Public Schools of Brookline (the “PSB”) and/or fund school expansion projects.

In 2008, the Town formed an Efficiency Initiative Committee (the “EIC”) in order to conduct a comprehensive review of Town operations and to recommend efficiencies and service reductions. The EIC released its final report in 2009 (the “EIC Report”), and many of the recommendations from that report have been implemented over the past four years. The Subcommittee used the EIC Report as a starting point and guide for its work and did not attempt to duplicate the level of line item budget analysis performed by the Advisory Committee and Town Meeting.

The Subcommittee chose to focus its review on the eight Town departments with the largest budgets: the Police Department, the Department of Public Works, the Fire Department, the Building Department, the Library, the Information Technology Department, the Health and Human Services Department and the Recreation Department. Based on numerous meetings and conversations with department heads and the Deputy Town Administrator, the Subcommittee identified the following areas of potential savings for further review by the Selectmen and Town staff. The Subcommittee recognizes that these items, if implemented, often represent reductions in service, and that there may be unintended consequences of budget cuts that the Subcommittee cannot foresee.

Police Department

Background

The fiscal year (“FY”) 2015 budget for the Brookline Police Department (the “BPD”) is approximately \$15.3 million, a 7% increase over the FY 2010 budget of \$14.3 million. In the same time frame, the Town budget has grown from \$60.1 million to \$67.6 million, or 12.5 percent. Brookline is contiguous on three sides with Boston, which has a substantially higher crime rate. The proximity of Boston and the need of other suburban communities to travel through Brookline to Boston for work and activities mean that the Town of Brookline has a significantly higher volume of traffic on its streets, especially major roadways. In addition, abundant mass transit access and proximity to major employers and sports venues creates a higher need in the community for traffic and parking enforcement, the two major sources of complaints to the BPD.

The BPD is comprised of the Patrol Division, the Community Service Division, the Detective Division, the Traffic Services Division and an Administrative Division. Unlike many other local police departments, the BPD performs its own criminal investigations and detective work which allows it to clear cases more quickly.

Despite the fact that there has been no increase in personnel since the last override, incidents of major crime have fallen. The number of Part A crimes (violent and property) in Brookline has fallen 22.4 percent since 2003, with a 12 percent year-on-year decline occurring between 2012 and 2013. Of the seven major categories of Part A crime, five (assault, robbery, murder, larceny and burglary) have shown declines over the 10-year and 2012-2013 period. Incidents of rape were six in 2013 (the 10-year average is slightly above five), and motor vehicle thefts went up slightly between 2012 and 2013 but remain at a small fraction of the number a decade ago.

There were 127,962 parking tickets issued in 2013, down by nine percent from the 141,401 in 2012.

As shown below, BPD costs are high whether compared to New England towns, towns of similar size, or 24 other Massachusetts cities and towns with similar-sized populations. ¹

Rank	Municipality	Pop.	Police Budget	\$/capita	Rank	Municipality	Pop.	Police Budget	\$/capita
1	Brookline	59,115	\$ 14,116,026	238.8	14	Newton	88,307	\$ 15,233,213	176.5
2	Quincy	93,027	\$ 21,948,112	235.9	15	Peabody	51,867	\$ 9,068,454	174.8
3	New Bedford	94,929	\$ 21,095,789	222.2	16	Chicopee	55,490	\$ 9,416,937	169.7
4	Waltham	61,918	\$ 13,183,144	212.9	17	Weymouth	54,906	\$ 9,197,240	167.5
5	Everett	42,567	\$ 8,818,270	207.2	18	Malden	60,374	\$ 9,756,806	161.6
6	Taunton	56,055	\$ 10,862,447	193.8	19	Revere	53,179	\$ 8,298,233	156.0
7	Somerville	77,104	\$ 14,499,291	188.1	20	Plymouth	57,463	\$ 8,619,707	150.0
8	Medford	57,033	\$ 10,682,657	187.3	21	Frammingham	70,068	\$ 10,392,383	148.3
9	Pittsfield	44,168	\$ 8,197,716	185.6	22	Lawrence	77,326	\$ 11,241,583	145.4
10	Lynn	91,253	\$ 16,831,591	184.5	23	Attleboro	43,837	\$ 6,238,291	142.3
11	Fall River	88,945	\$ 16,287,048	183.1	24	Haverhill	61,797	\$ 8,687,959	140.6
12	Methuen	48,009	\$ 8,704,872	181.3	25	Arlington	43,711	\$ 5,770,660	132.0
13	Brockton	94,094	\$ 17,045,999	181.2					
						Total	1,624,542	\$ 294,194,428	
						Average	64,982	\$ 11,767,777	178.7

The BPD is composed of 178.3 full-time equivalent employees (“FTEs”) in FY 2015, down slightly from 178.8 in 2009. This number includes the Chief and Superintendent, 136 uniformed officers (30 of whom are captains, lieutenants or sergeants, 104 serving as patrol officers). It also includes 15 FTEs in emergency telecomm dispatch, 14.1 FTEs in school traffic/parking control, and 14.1 FTEs in business and administration. Since 2009, there has been a slight increase in civilian staff, which consist of 39 full-time and 17 part-time civilian staff.

¹ 2012 MA Dept. of Revenue Municipal Databank <http://www.mass.gov/dor/local-officials/municipal-data-and-financial-management/data-bank-reports/municipal-actual-revenues-and-expenditures.html>

The EIC Report recommended a number of personnel and staffing changes within the BPD. These included:

	Initiative	Description	FY 14 Status
1	Parking Meter Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civilianize 2 positions Continue multi-space program Find ways to sell parking meter cards Monitor whether multi-space meters can lead to staff reductions 	Done (FY10 budget) Done (FY11 CIP) Done (PXT; now credit cards OK) Chose not to reduce staff
2	Parking Ticket Admin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicit bids for parking ticket administration If service remains in-house, acquire hand-held devices to reduce staff by 1 FTE Write more tickets Improve ticket collection rate Review number of unpaid tickets allowed before a car is towed (in- or out-of-state) 	Done: stayed in-house Done (FY11 budget) FY11 budget added 2 ticketer FTEs Contracted for collection of delinquent out-of-state tickets
3	Police Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus any budget reductions on non-patrol areas (traffic, community service, animal control) Civilianize 2 IT positions upon retirement Civilianize the Crime Analyst position 	Done Not vacant yet Not vacant yet
4	Police Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue use of Police Officers on details Monitor any cost differential between civilian flaggers and uniformed officers Examine administration of details for possible cost efficiencies 	

Changes recommended by the EIC Report have been made as a result of retirement or attrition and reform of the hours and utilization of personnel within the Traffic Services Division. If further staffing reductions were required as a result of budget reductions, the BPD believes that such reductions would impact the non-patrol divisions.

Identified Options

1. Hire part-time crossing guards to enable Parking Control Officers to focus on their core function.

According to the Chief of Police, Daniel O’Leary, there are currently nine Parking Control Officers that spend upwards of three hours per day as crossing guards at Brookline elementary schools. Estimates based on limited data suggest that the Town could generate approximately \$120,000 per year in additional revenue from parking tickets if these nine Parking Control Officers were replaced with part-time crossing guards (\$200,000 in additional ticket revenue less approximately \$80,000 for part-time crossing guard salaries). Because changing the duties of the Parking Control Officers involves changes to job classification, implementation of this option requires collective bargaining, unless done through attrition of current staff.

2. Modify Police Detail Procedures for Town Projects Using Private Forces

Police details (i.e., the assignment of uniformed officers to direct traffic at construction and work sites or at public and private events) are required for Town projects performed by private contractors under Section 7.3 of the

Town By-law unless the Police Chief, or his designee, determines that such work will not cause “a disruption of normal flow of traffic” or result in “a safety hazard to pedestrian or vehicular traffic.” The Town spends approximately \$344,000 per year on these details. Need is determined by the level of traffic, speed, configuration of the intersection, and other factors.²

Details are billed at four-hour blocks for the first eight hours and at two-hour minimums thereafter. Officers are compensated at one and one-half times their regular hourly rate as specified in the union contract. A full-time Detail Sergeant is assigned to supervise all details, including the assignment of staff in accordance with a mathematical formula to assure fairness and opportunity for all officers to perform detail work. According to the Chief, there are no complaints or grievances about the system.

The Town imposes a 10% administrative surcharge on details required by private contractors. In 2013, the Town recovered \$182,442 in surcharges to offset the administrative costs of supervision, billing, and collection. The billing process has been streamlined so that 91% of charges are collected within 90 days.

The Subcommittee explored the possibility of Town administrative staff assuming responsibility for detail assignment, eliminating the need for a uniformed officer to perform this task. However, because the Town is prohibited from charging fees in excess of its cost of service provision, any potential savings would result in a corresponding decrease in the surcharge.

Also explored was the potential for using civilian flaggers instead of uniformed officers. Under the prevailing wage law, this would result in minimal savings.

The Town By-law could be modified to make some or all Town projects performed by private forces exempt from police detail requirements. It is not possible to evaluate the potential savings from such a change because the number of Town projects fluctuates annually and Town departments should request details for projects where the danger to traffic, the workers, or both is significant. The BPD has concerns that eliminating the requirement for police details for these Town projects would result in decreased safety, particularly since projects involving private forces are generally larger scale than projects involving only Town forces.

Department of Public Works

Background

The Brookline Department of Works (“DPW”) is responsible for planning, designing, operating, maintaining, and managing public ways, park lands, open

² Computation of this average excludes costs of details reimbursed by the MWRA in connection with the lower Beacon Street MWRA project.

space, public grounds, Town cemeteries, water distribution systems, sewer collection systems, the collection/disposal of solid waste, and recycling. DPW has a total of 133 FTEs organized in five divisions: Administration, Engineering and Transportation, Highway, Sanitation, and Parks and Open Space. The DPW's FY 2015 budget is \$14.1 million, exclusive of the Town's Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund which covers the annual cost of maintaining the Town's water and sewer infrastructure through user fees.

The EIC Report made the following recommendations with respect to DPW operations:

	Grounds Maintenance	FY 14 Status
1	Develop specs for an RFP for grass cutting	Done; chose to stay in house
2	Work with the Dept. of Corrections to add another crew to work on the Emerald Necklace	Additional resources allocated to Brookline
3	Institute a parks recyclables program	Done
4	Work with Schools to reduce litter	Underway
5	Explore expanding the Adopt-A-Space program	
	Other	FY 14 Status
1	Solicit bids by private vendor (Fleet Maintenance)	Done (eliminated one position in FY12 budget)
2	Maintain current structure (Town Custodial services)	FY11 budget included more contractual
	Solid Waste / Yard Waste Collection	FY 14 Status
1	Solicit bids for curbside collection by private vendor	Completed previously and again in FY2014; chose to stay in house. Town considering automated toters.
2	Review ways to increase recycling	Implemented single stream recycling
3	Urge committee studying Pay-As-You-Throw to develop recommendations ASAP	Done
4	Urge DPW to develop other revenue and cost saving options	Solid waste disposal contract bid in FY2014.
	Street Sweeping	FY 14 Status
1	Solicit bids by private vendor	Previously completed; chose to stay in house.
2	Develop a plan for continuing to do this work directly but with at least one less FTE	Done (FY10 budget)
3	Develop more accurate methods of maintaining records of actual costs of functions performed by street sweepers	Done
4	Examine the productivity of the street sweeping function to determine mgmt. improvements	Done

All of the foregoing recommendations have been completed by the DPW, and the DPW has or is considering a number of other efficiencies as a result of the EIC report.

Identified Options

1. Move to a hybrid pay-as-you throw program and automated toter collection system for curbside garbage collection.

The DPW currently disposes of approximately 9,100 tons of solid waste per year. DPW forces currently perform curbside solid waste collection. Once solid waste is collected curbside, it is delivered to the Town's transfer station. A private contractor removes solid waste from the transfer station. A new contract for solid waste removal commenced on July 1, 2014 and will cost the Town approximately \$479,000 per year. This represents a cost reduction of approximately \$200,000 per year in comparison to the contract that expired on June 30, 2014. The Town previously outsourced metals disposal, but decided to perform this function with Town forces as of July 1, 2014. This will save the Town approximately \$85,000 per year.

The Town's transfer station has a license, issued by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (the "EPA"), to accept up to 135 tons of solid waste per day. Currently, the transfer station receives approximately 35 tons of solid waste per day. The Town sells the excess capacity to our hauling contractor as part of the solid waste removal contract.

Currently, curbside trash is collected five days a week (Monday through Friday). During weeks containing a holiday or due to inclement weather, the collection schedule is typically delayed by one weekday which leads to curbside collection on Saturday and overtime pay for DPW employees.

The Town continues to review both a hybrid pay-as-you-throw program for curbside waste collection that would involve a standard toter and "overflow" bags, and an automated toter collection system, which would reduce labor costs over time by allowing for the elimination of at least two and possibly three FTEs. In addition, the Town is considering implementing a four-day curbside collection schedule (Monday through Thursday) that would eliminate Saturday curbside collection during weeks containing a holiday. If the Town implements an automated toter collection system and a 4-day collection schedule, the Town would incur initial costs associated with the lease or purchase of toters and new garbage trucks but would save approximately \$2.3 million over 10 years.

2. Outsource the maintenance of parks, open space and town grounds

The Parks and Open Space Division manages over 100 parcels including, parks, cemeteries, and building grounds. The Town is divided into four maintenance zones and employees rotate on a nine- to twelve-day schedule through their assigned zones. Litter is collected daily at schools, and long

term plantings are done on a week to week basis.

Costs for grounds and open space maintenance have significantly increased in recent years primarily due to prevailing wage requirements. To combat cost increases, positions were restructured and maintenance activities were reduced. However, the Town has already received an increased number of complaints about grounds and parks maintenance. Additional reductions could further decrease the quality of parks and open spaces and could result in a decrease in the safety of parks and playing fields.

An analysis prepared by the Parks and Open Space Division shows that (a) outsourcing grass cutting at parks and athletic fields could save approximately \$45,000/year, and (b) outsourcing maintenance of parks, open spaces and town grounds could save approximately \$73,000/year.

3. Rebid contract for fleet maintenance with a clearer scope than in 2009.

The DPW maintains all vehicles for all Town departments except for the Fire Department which has its own maintenance crew due to the specialized nature of the equipment and the size of its vehicles, which are too large for the DPW facility. Eight DPW mechanics, two of whom are foremen, are responsible for approximately 200 vehicles and 580 pieces of machinery and other equipment. Town departments have indicated that they are satisfied with the level of service provided.

The DPW issued a request for proposals for the outsourcing of fleet maintenance in 2007 and 2009 and decided in both instances that it was more cost effective to keep the program in-house. However, in 2009, the request for proposals lacked clear cost definitions, resulting in responses that contained significant cost risks including uncapped amounts for certain repairs. It may be possible to obtain cost effective bids if the request for proposals includes detailed cost information. Any potential savings must be weighed against a reduction in service levels.

Summary of Additional Findings

1. Town Skating Rink

Outsourcing maintenance of the skating rink would not result in any personnel savings because they are performed on a seasonal basis by one FTE who would still be needed for other duties the rest of the year.

2. Recycling Contract

The Town is currently in year three of its five-year recycling contract and has an option to extend the contract for two additional years. The recycling contract appears to be functioning well. Since its implementation, recycling has increased by 18% and solid waste handled by the Town has decreased by 10%.

Street Sweeping

Three full-time DPW employees currently perform street sweeping operations seven days a week from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. for 37 weeks of the year (no sweeping is performed in the winter months). At the current rate of 120 hours of sweeping per week, street sweeping operations cover 223 lane miles per week.

Main streets and commercial areas are swept three times a week during spring, summer and fall (37 weeks). Residential streets are swept every 14 days during spring, summer and fall (37 weeks). The Town is subject to an EPA consent order regarding discharge into the Muddy River. Compliance with the consent order prevents DPW from any reductions to the current street sweeping schedule.³ The Town could request that the EPA consider revising the consent order to allow for a lower level of street sweeping. However, engaging with the EPA could be difficult and any reduction in sweeping could have an adverse environmental effect on the Muddy River.

Fire Department

Background

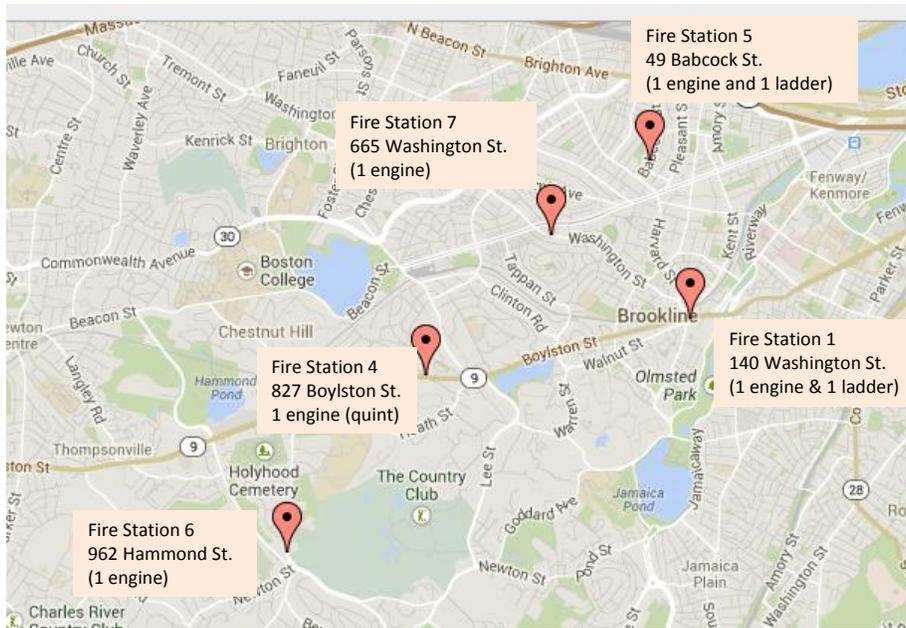
The primary purposes of the Brookline Fire Department (the “BFD”) are to provide fire suppression, fire prevention and emergency medical services for the Town. The BFD is comprised of 161 FTEs, the vast majority of whom are sworn firefighters. The BFD has a projected FY 2015 budget of approximately \$13 million.

The BFD’s fire suppression and emergency response personnel are organized into seven companies among five fire stations in the Town. The BFD operates with five engines⁴ and two ladder trucks, and each company operates one apparatus. Four firefighters are assigned to an apparatus per shift and each shift is 24 hours.

³ The consent order requires that main streets and commercial areas be swept at least once every three weeks and that residential streets be swept at least twice a month.

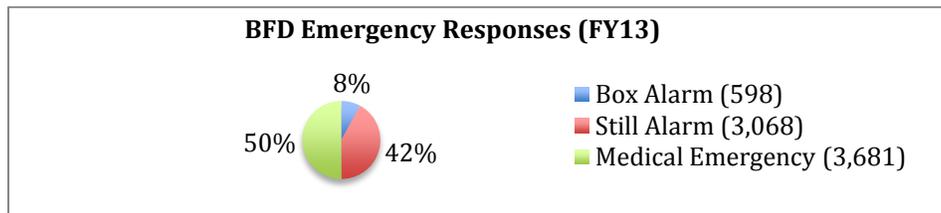
⁴ The apparatus at Station 4 is actually an apparatus known as a quint, which can function as either an engine or a ladder truck (but not both at the same time). The BFD operates this quint as an engine.

Brookline Fire Stations



Firefighter staffing has been consistent since FY 2010 when seven FTEs were eliminated. In addition to fire suppression, the Department is a first responder for medical and other emergencies.

The BFD responds to more emergency calls for medical emergencies than any other type of emergency. In FY 2013, the BFD responded to a total of 7,347 emergency calls, 3,681 of which were for medical emergencies. Of the 3,666 fire suppression calls, six were multiple alarm fires, 19 resulted in a loss of less than \$100,000, and one resulted in a loss greater than \$100,000.



According to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, the Town’s per capita spending on fire department operations ranked as the 19th highest in the state and more than 40% higher than the state average. In comparison to the 25 most comparable communities based on population, Brookline has the highest per capita fire department spending. Of the 25 Massachusetts communities most similar in terms of land area to Brookline, Brookline ranks 2nd highest in fire department spending per capita, 73.7% higher than the average. When comparing the Town to the 25 Massachusetts municipalities most similar in

population density to Brookline, Brookline ranks 4th highest in Fire department spending per capita, 26.0% higher than the average.⁵

The 2009 EIC Report made the following recommendations with respect to BFD operations:

	Recommendation	FY 14 Status
1	Reduce fire suppression budget by \$1.4 million.	Not completed
2	Develop a long term strategy for considering other ways to reduce costs, including manning, technology, and other operating efficiencies.	Completed. Resulted in 2010 Matrix Study
3	Implement various technology initiatives.	Ongoing
4	Adopt written standards for firefighter training. Compare standards to other department and, if the comparison shows the training hours are excessive, reduce staffing in the division.	Not completed
5	Continue to train recruits in Brookline	Completed
6	Continue to allow other recruits from other communities to train in Brookline for no cost	Completed
7	Reorganize fire prevention division to include 1 Deputy Chief, 1 firefighter, and 1 civilian clerical staff.	Completed (FY 2010)
8	Consider increasing inspection fees	Completed, Increased (FY10)
9	Merge call box maintenance staff with DPW traffic systems division	Completed (FY10)
10	Increase master box fee from \$400 to \$750	Completed (FY10)
11	Move to a wireless master box system	Reconsidered

The BFD implemented most of the EIC recommendations but did not reduce the fire suppression budget.

2010 Matrix Report

In response to the recommendation of the EIC to develop a long-term strategy to reduce costs, the Town hired Matrix Consulting Group to perform a study on what steps could be taken to reduce the BFD budget without significantly impacting the level of service provided by the BFD. The resulting report (the “Matrix Report”) concluded that the Town could take the following steps without significantly impacting emergency response time:

1. Reduce firefighter staffing from four firefighters per apparatus to three firefighters per apparatus. The Matrix Report estimated that this would save the Town \$2,900,000 per year.
2. Reduce firefighter staffing from four firefighters per apparatus to three firefighters per apparatus on fire engines only. The Matrix Report estimated that the savings from this staffing change would be \$1,900,000 per year.
3. Replace the fire engine and ladder truck at Station 1 with an apparatus called a quint, which can function as an engine or a ladder truck, but not at the same time. This would result in the elimination of a fire company which would result in annual saving of \$1,700,000.

None of the foregoing actions have been taken by the Town.

⁵ <http://www.mass.gov/dor/local-officials/municipal-data-and-financial-management/data-bank-reports/municipal-actual-revenues-and-expenditures.html>

Identified Options

1. Reduce firefighter staffing from four to three for all companies or for engine companies only

Pursuant to the current union contract, all engines and ladder trucks are to be staffed with a minimum of four firefighters. Boston and Brookline are the only municipalities in Massachusetts that require four firefighters on all apparatus throughout the year. Three other communities require four firefighters on certain apparatus, but not all apparatus all of the time.⁶ All other communities in Massachusetts have minimum apparatus staffing requirements of three firefighters or less. This also appears to be the trend nationally. A 2012 survey by the International City/County Management Association of 1,150 communities across the United States with greater than 10,000 citizens indicated that, of the communities that had a minimum apparatus staffing requirement, the average minimum staffing was three.

As a result, a reduction in the minimum staffing level from four to three would not place Brookline below the minimum staffing levels of most communities regionally or nationally.

- a. Potential cost savings

If the Town were able to modify the firefighter union contract to allow for the reduction of firefighters per apparatus from four to three, the Subcommittee estimates that the Town would save approximately \$2,900,000 per year. A reduction of firefighters on engines only would save the Town approximately \$2,100,000 per year.

⁶ According to the 2009 EIC Report, Needham staffs engines with four firefighters but only staff ladder trucks with two firefighters, (b) Waltham staffs engines and ladder trucks with three or four firefighters, and (c) Newton staffs engines with four firefighters in the winter, but only three in the summer, and ladders with four firefighters all year.

Financial effect of reducing firefighter staffing on all apparatus

	4 FF Per Apparatus	3 FF Per Apparatus
Firefighters per shift	28	21
# of shifts	4	4
Base # of req. Firefighters	112	84
Staffing factor	1.26	1.26
Total Firefighters req. (unrounded)	142 (141.12)	106 (105.84)
Average Firefighter Salary and Benefits	\$80,531	\$80,531
Total Req. Firefighter Salary and Benefits	\$11,435,402	\$8,536,286

Difference of \$2,899,116

Financial effect of reducing firefighter staffing on engines only⁷

	4 FF Per Apparatus	3 FF Per Apparatus
Firefighters per shift	28	23
# of shifts	4	4
Base # of req. Firefighters	112	92
Staffing factor	1.26	1.26
Total Firefighters req. (unrounded)	142 (141.12)	116 (115.92)
Average Firefighter Salary and Benefits	\$80,531	\$80,531
Total Req. Firefighter Salary and Benefits	\$11,435,402	\$9,341,596

Difference of \$2,093,806

b. Professional standards

Standard 1710 promulgated by the National Fire Prevention Association (“NFPA 1710”) is widely cited as the standard by which fire departments measure their operations. The minimum staffing for engines and ladder trucks under NFPA 1710 is four firefighters. Under NFPA 1710, this is the minimum staffing level required to adequately respond to a fire within a 2000 square foot single-family home with no basement and no “exposures” (i.e., adjacent structures to which a fire could easily spread). In environments with features that make it tactically more difficult to fight fires such as medium and high-rise buildings, densely packed communities, structures with basements, etc., NFPA 1710 calls for each engine and ladder truck to be staffed by five or six firefighters. A staffing level of three

⁷ Average firefighter salary with benefits was taken from the Matrix Report.

firefighters per apparatus is acceptable under NFPA 1710 if there are multiple apparatus in a company “that are assigned, that are dispatched and arrive together, continuously operate together, and are managed by a single company officer.” Brookline fire companies are comprised of just one apparatus.

According to the Brookline Building Department, there are no single-family homes of 2,000 square feet or less without a basement and without any exposures in the Town. As a result, and due to the fact that certain portions of Brookline are densely populated and contain mid-rise and high-rise structures, one could argue that BFD apparatus would need to be minimally staffed with five or six firefighters in order to meet the standards established by NFPA 1710.

However, and as indicated previously, even the City of Boston, which would appear to have tactical challenges greater than Brookline does not staff its engines and ladder trucks with five or six firefighters and no other Massachusetts community has universal four firefighter staffing. Therefore, it appears that no community in Massachusetts (and perhaps few nationwide) are fully adhering to the standards established by NFPA 1710.

c. Response Time

The NFPA standard for response time requires that the first engine company arrive at a fire in four minutes or less 90% of the time and that all personnel constituting a “full alarm assignment” arrive at a fire in eight minutes or less 90% of the time. The International Association of Firefighters suggests that a “full alarm assignment” should be 14 to 17 firefighters. In Brookline, a “full alarm assignment” is 20 firefighters.

Based on the Matrix Report, Brookline’s current staffing allows for the BFD to have both the first engine company arrive at a fire in four minutes or less and the full alarm assignment to arrive at a fire in eight minutes or less 100% of the time. Reducing staffing on all apparatus from four to three would still allow for the first engine company arrive at a fire in four minutes or less 100% of the time, but the number of fires to which four firefighters would arrive in four minutes or less would be reduced from 100% to 94%. In addition, reducing staffing on all apparatus from four to three firefighters would reduce the percentage of fires to which a full alarm assignment could arrive within eight minutes or less from 100% to 96%. However, the BFD’s response time, although reduced, would still be well within the NFPA standard if the per apparatus staffing were reduced from four to three.

Effect of Reducing Firefighter Staffing on Response Time

	4 FF Per Apparatus	3 FF Per Apparatus	4 FF Per Ladder 3 FF Per Engine
3 Firefighters w/in 4 minutes	100%	100%	100%
4 Firefighters w/in 4 minutes	100%	94%	94%
16 Firefighters w/in 8 minutes	100%	96%	100%
20 Firefighters w/in 8 minutes	100%	96%	96%

d. Effect of staffing on fire suppression activities

There appear to be no standards with respect to the amount of time that firefighters complete their fire response activities. Nevertheless, based on two studies conducted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology of the U.S. Department of Commerce (the “NIST”), the amount of time it takes firefighters to complete many standard firefighting activities increases as the number of firefighters within firefighter teams decreases.

In 2010, the NIST issued a report comparing the effectiveness of firefighter teams of different sizes when fighting a fire within a 2000-square-foot two-story residential structure. The results are summarized in the following table.

Summary of 2010 NIST Residential Study

Activity	Result
Overall Scene Time	4FF were 5.1 minutes (25%) faster than 3FF
Time to Water on Fire	4FF were 6% faster than 3FF
Ground Ladders and Ventilation	4FF were 25% faster than 3FF
Primary Search	4FF were 6% (approximately 36 seconds) faster than 3FF
Hose Stretch Time	4FF and 5FF were 76 seconds faster than 2FF and 3FF
Occupant Rescue	4FF were 7 seconds faster than 3FF

In 2013, the NIST issued a report comparing the effectiveness of firefighter teams of different sizes when fighting a fire within a 13-story high-rise office building. The results of this study are summarized in the following table.

Summary of 2013 NIST High-rise Study

Activity	Result
Overall Scene Time	4FF were 12 minutes faster than 3FF
Advance Attack Line	4FF were 1 minute 43 seconds (8.5%) faster than 3FF
Fire Out	4FF were 2 minutes 14 seconds faster than 3FF
Start of Search and Rescue, 10 th Floor	4FF were 1 minute 23 seconds faster than 3FF
Victim #1 Found	4FF were 13 minutes 11 seconds faster than 3FF
Victim #1 Descent	4FF were 12 minutes 21 seconds faster than 3FF
Complete Search and Rescue, 11 th Floor	4FF were 9 minutes 31 seconds (18.6%) faster than 3FF
Victim #2 Found	4FF were 14 minutes 42 seconds faster than 3FF

Based on these NIST studies, it seems likely that reducing the minimum number of personnel on fire department apparatus from four to three would result in some decrease in the speed with which the BFD can perform fire suppression activities.

e. Injuries

In considering whether staffing per apparatus should be reduced from four to three, it is important to consider whether such a decrease would result in an increase in firefighter injuries. In 1990, the City of Providence and the Providence Fire Department jointly conducted a study to determine whether there was any link between the number of firefighters per apparatus and firefighter injuries. At the time, Providence was operating with a minimum of three firefighters per apparatus. The study focused on six companies within the Providence Fire Department. During the study period, staffing for these companies was increased from three firefighters per apparatus to four. Injury data during the study period was then compared against the same three-month period during the prior year. The results indicated that firefighters were injured at a greater rate when operating in companies of three firefighters than when operating in companies of four firefighters. To the Subcommittee’s knowledge, this is the only real world study of this issue. It is difficult to understand how this data would correlate to BFD operations but, based on the Providence study, the Town should consider the possibility that increased firefighter injury could result from a reduction in firefighter staffing and that, in addition to the human costs, the total financial costs

related to such firefighter injuries (i.e., disability claims, increased overtime, etc.) could reduce any savings resulting from reducing firefighter staffing.

Summary of 1990 Providence Injury Study

	Control Period (9/89 – 2/90)	Study Period (9/90 – 2/91)	% Reduction During Study Period
Total Runs	6,152	5,956	3.2%
Structure Fires	415	413	0.5%
Total Injuries	42	31	26.2%
Time Loss Injuries	31	23	25.8%
Shifts Lost Due to Injury	1,832	531	71.0%

2. Eliminate one fire company

The BFD currently operates four engines, one quint and two ladder trucks. BFD's quint, which is an apparatus that can operate as either an engine or a ladder (but not both at the same time), is operated as an engine. The BFD's firefighters are currently organized into seven companies (one apparatus per company) located at five stations. Station 1 and Station 5 in north Brookline each house two companies (an engine and a ladder truck at each station).

One cost saving option that was identified in the Matrix Report and that was further analyzed by the Subcommittee is the elimination of one apparatus and the corresponding reduction of the number of companies from seven to six. Eliminating a fire company would save the Town approximately \$1,700,000 per year.

Financial Effect of Eliminating 1 Fire Company

	7 Companies	6 Companies
Firefighters per shift	28	24
# of shifts	4	4
Base # of req. Firefighters	112	96
Staffing factor	1.26	1.26
Total Firefighters req. (unrounded)	142 (141.12)	121 (120.96)
Average Firefighter Salary and Benefits	\$80,531	\$80,531
Total Req. Firefighter Salary and Benefits	\$11,435,402	\$9,744,251

Difference of \$1,691,151

a. Replacement of Ladder and Engine Company with a quint

One manner in which the number of BFD companies could be reduced is to replace the engine and ladder at either Station 1 or Station 5 with a quint.

1. Response Time

The Matrix Report analyzed the effect of replacing the engine and ladder at Station 1 with a quint on response time and found that, although there would be some reduction of response time, the BFD would still be able to cause four firefighters to arrive on scene within four minutes and all other responding personnel within eight minutes greater than 90% of the time which complies with the response time standards set forth in NFPA 1710. It is unknown whether response time would be adversely affected if the engine and ladder at Station 5 were replaced with a quint. If the Town considers replacing the engine and ladder at Station 5 with a quint, the Town should contact Matrix to have them update the Matrix Report to include an analysis of this option.

Effect of Eliminating a Fire Company on Response Time

	7 Companies	6 Companies
3 Firefighters w/in 4 minutes	100%	100%
4 Firefighters w/in 4 minutes	100%	100%
16 Firefighters w/in 8 minutes	100%	100%
20 Firefighters w/in 8 minutes	100%	96%

2. Loss of engine and ladder capacity

If an engine and ladder truck were replaced by a quint at either Station 1 or Station 5, then there would be a loss of either engine or ladder capacity in the vicinity of the quint's home station due to the fact that the quint cannot function as a ladder and an engine at the same. In such situations, if the quint is functioning as a ladder truck, then an engine would need to come from further away which could delay the amount of time it takes to get water on a fire. If the quint is functioning as an engine in such situations, then a ladder truck would need to come from further away thus causing a possible delay in ladder operations. The Matrix Report evaluates the option of replacing the engine and ladder truck at Station 1 with a quint but does not evaluate any impact relating to loss of engine or ladder capacity. In any event, it is possible that the adverse effect of reduced ladder or engine capacity could be mitigated through the use of mutual aid from a neighboring municipality but the likelihood or the effectiveness of such mitigation is unknown.

In addition, Chief Ford believes that it is essential to have two ladder trucks in order to effectively suppress working structure fires (so much so that Chief Ford indicated that he would seriously consider eliminating an engine company before replacing a ladder truck and engine with a quint).

b. Elimination of an engine company

If the Town chose to reduce the number of fire companies from seven to six, it could also choose to eliminate an engine company. This could also possibly reduce the need for a fire station if the company eliminated is at any station that does not house a ladder company (i.e., any station other than Station 1 or Station 5). Any such fire station could then be sold or repurposed. Alternatively, the Town could consider whether there is any value in having an engine company from another station operate out of the station at which the fire company is eliminated on a part-time basis.

The Matrix Report did not analyze the effect of eliminating an engine company as described above. Therefore it is not known what effect such action would have on BFD response time. If the Town considers this option, it should contact Matrix or another consultant and request that this issue be analyzed.

c. Loss of secondary emergency response

The BFD currently sends a minimum of five companies to any working fire, leaving two companies in reserve to respond to any secondary emergency. If a fire company was eliminated and the total number of companies is reduced from seven to six, then there would be one less company in reserve to respond to a secondary emergency that occurs during a working fire.

However, the likelihood that a second emergency requiring the BFD response occurring during a working structure fire seems statistically low.

3. Assess the triaging of emergency calls

The BFD currently responds to all emergency calls, the majority of which are for medical emergencies, not fire suppression or rescue. Triaging emergency calls so that the BFD only responds when there is a clear need for BFD personnel could reduce the number of calls to which the BFD responds, resulting in decreased wear and tear on fire equipment. Decreased wear and tear on fire equipment could extend the useful life of such equipment which could result in savings.

A number of cities and towns have created “tiered” or triaged EMS response systems as a way of lowering the volume of firefighter responses. For example, as part of its Tiered EMS Response, the City of Toronto has implemented the recommendations of an expert panel of physicians based on a patient-focused, medically-based study of more than 116,000 EMS calls. The *Toronto Star*⁸ described the changes as follows:

“Changes to Toronto’s 911 protocol were put into place in June 2012. Using EMS data, a panel of medical experts recommended firefighters only attend the types of medical calls where they performed, or could have performed, an effective intervention in at least one per cent of cases. Following the review, firefighters were taken off of more than 50 types of medical calls, and added to 22. They have since been reinstated on a half-dozen calls that they were removed from.”

A Toronto-style evidence-based approach to the assignment of professional assistance can bring significant focus to the work of firefighters, steering them to calls where their presence is especially important. *Prehospital Emergency Care: Official Journal of the National Association of EMS Physicians and the National Association of State EMS Directors* performed a study of the Toronto experience and described the results as follows:⁹

“This study suggests that a formal Emergency Medical Dispatch system can reduce first-responder call volume by roughly one-half. The system appears to be safe for patients, with an under-triage rate of about one-half of one percent.”

The Subcommittee suspects that such a system may reduce wear and tear on BFD equipment and improve the quality of services provided. Further study of this option would be required if the Town were interested in exploring a tiered response system.

⁸http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2013/08/06/toronto_paramedics_and_firefighters_at_odds_over_medical_calls.html

⁹ Prehosp Emerg Care. 2008 Oct-Dec;12(4):479-85;
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18924012#>

Summary of Additional Findings

1. ISO Ratings

The Subcommittee reviewed the potential impact of changes to BFD staffing levels on Insurance Services Office (“ISO”) ratings which impact residential insurance bills. The ISO rates each community on a scale of one to ten, with ten being the worst. Brookline currently has a rating of two as do Boston, Newton, Brookline and Somerville. All other communities in the greater Boston area have a rating of three. It is not known whether any change to BFD operations would impact the Town’s ISO rating, nor is there any evidence that a decrease in rating from two to three would affect insurance rates. It should be noted that an insurance broker advised the EIC that insurers do not consider ISO ratings when determining insurance premiums.¹⁰

Building Department

Background

The Building Department is responsible for public safety during construction, alteration, repair and demolition of structures within Brookline. The Department reviews and issues permits for construction, demolition, remodeling and repair, and provides certificates of occupancy. It is also responsible for the repairs and maintenance of all Town and PSB buildings and managing the daily operation of Town Hall, the Health Center and Public Safety Headquarters. The Building Department is staffed by 33.42 FTEs and has a budget of \$7 million. The EIC Report recommended that the Building Department (1) Reduce staff by one FTE after implementation of its new permitting system and (2) review whether both a Plans Review Inspector and a Deputy Commissioner are needed. A new permitting system has been implemented, but the Building Department has not reduced its staff by one as the anticipated decrease in staffing need anticipated to be achieved as a result of the new permitting system did not materialize. The position of Deputy Commissioner has been eliminated.

Identified Options

It is anticipated that the Department’s workload will increase significantly in the next few years as proposed school capital projects are implemented. Consequently, the Subcommittee identified no areas of potential savings at this time.

Library

Background

The Public Library of Brookline (“PLB”) operates three branches: the Main Library (361 Washington St.), Coolidge Corner (31 Pleasant St.), and Putterham

¹⁰ EIC Report, page 51.

(959 West Roxbury Parkway), and maintains an on-line catalog accessible at Brookline.gov/library. It is staffed by 40 full-time and 55 part-time employees for a total of 51.75 FTEs. Staffing is supplemented by 30-35 volunteers and work study students. The annual budget of \$3.75 million represents just under 2% of the Town's operating expenses.

In addition to Town funding, the PLB is the beneficiary of over 30 named trust funds managed by the Trustees of the PLB. The general purpose of the funds is "to enrich and enhance the quality of library services for this and future generations," though the use of many of the funds have more narrow restrictions imposed by the donors. As of March 31, 2013, the value of the funds was \$4.55 million.

The PLB has a collection of over 350,000 books, extensive back-files of newspapers, and periodicals, and current subscriptions to over 700 magazines, audiocassettes, videotapes, and compact discs. Circulation is the fourth highest in the state with only Boston, Cambridge, and Newton circulating more books. Coolidge Corner has the largest circulation of any branch library in the state and is the only Brookline library open on Sundays during the summer. It houses the Chinese language collection, one of the largest in the state, and most of the Russian language collection.

The libraries function as community centers, working in coordination with BEEP, Social Services, Recreation, the Senior Center, and the Teen Center to provide such programs as workshops in job hunting and resume writing, readings by guest authors, one-on-one technical training in the use electronic devices (smart phones, tablets, etc.), ESL conversations, and training in the use of the library's services and E-books. Adult programs are low cost and paid for by the library trust funds.

Since 1993, circulation has increased 150%. The items circulated per FTE almost tripled, and Brookline is the highest ranking library in the state in this category. The increased efficiency is largely the result of implementing an electronic system ("RFID") in FY 2010 to facilitate self-checkout and book sorting. Approximately 80% of books are processed through self-checkout due to the RFID tag, with much of the balance coming from materials borrowed through the Minuteman Library Network. This has enabled the PLB to reduce staffing by one FTE as recommended by the Efficiency Initiative Committee in 2009. Further efficiencies from RFID are dependent on its wider adoption by other participants in the network.

Identified Options

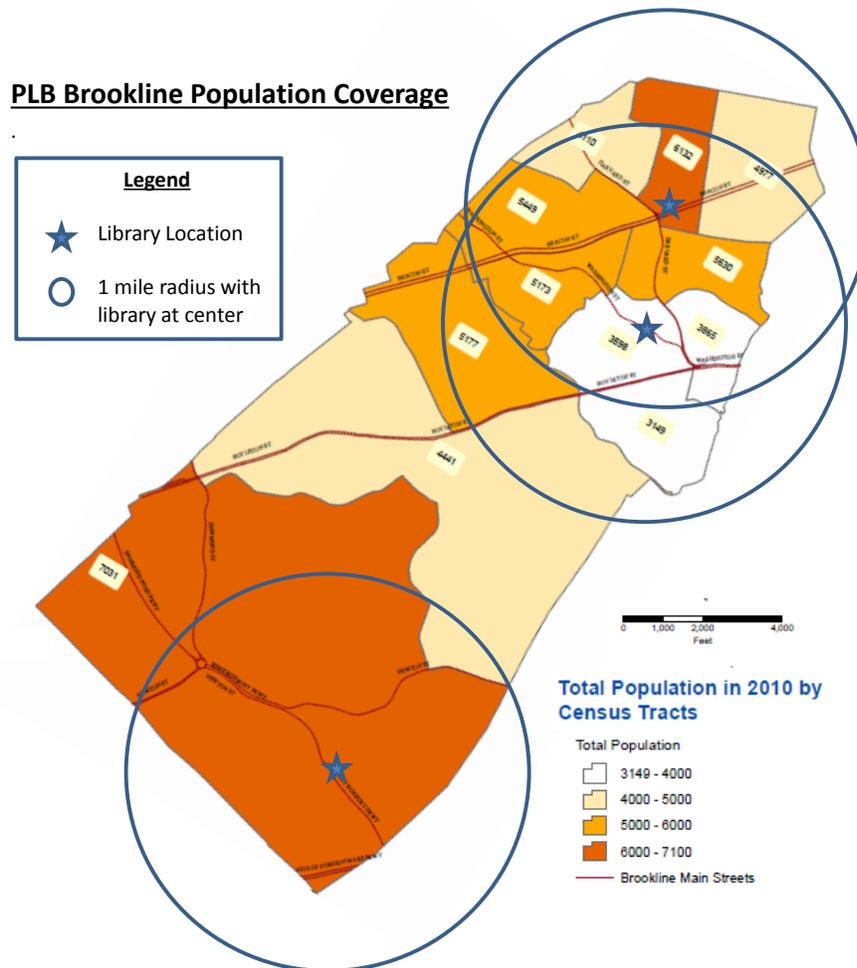
1. Reduction in budget for materials

The PLB purchases approximately 28,000 to 30,000 new items each year with a materials budget of approximately \$500,000 from the Town, supplemented by funding from PLB trust funds. If budget cuts become

necessary, the Town Librarian prefers reduction in this line which could potentially be offset by additional allocations from the trusts.

2. Closure of Putterham Branch

Putterham has the smallest circulation of the three locations and serves a higher percentage of non-residents (according to PLB staff, 40% at Putterham compared to 30% for the system as a whole). Closure would result in the elimination of three FTE salaries plus benefits for savings of approximately \$300,000 per year. However, a significant portion of Town residents would lose access to a community library within one mile of their home.



3. Reduction in hours of operation

The PLB operates three locations for a total of 165 hours of service each week (147 hours during July and August), which far exceeds the minimum requirement of 63 non-duplicated hours per week to receive full State aid. As shown below, in the PLB's self-identified peer group, only Cambridge has more hours of operation. Half of the peer group operates a main library only, and two-thirds do not offer Sunday hours during the summer.

PLB Operating Hours

Town/Branch	Population	Area	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	hours/week
Brookline	58,732	6.8 sq. mi.								165
Main			10-9	10-9	10-9	10-9	10-5	10-5	1-5	62
Coolidge Corner			10-6	10-9	10-6	10-9	9:30-5	9:30-5	1-5	57
Putterham			1-9	10-6	1-9	10-6	10-5	10-5	Closed	46
Newton	85,146	18.2 sq. mi.	9-9	9-9	9-9	9-9	9-6	9-5	1-5*	69
Lexington	31,394	16.4 sq. mi.	9-9	9-9	9-9	9-9	9-5	9-5	1-5*	68
Cambridge	105,162	7.1 sq. mi.								201.5
Main			9-9	9-9	9-9	9-9	9-5	9-5	1-5	68
Boudreau			10-6	10-8	10-6	Closed	10-6	Closed	Closed	36
Central Square			Temporarily closed for renovations							
Collins			10-6	10-6	Closed	1-8	10-6	Closed	Closed	31
O'Connell			10-5	10-7:30	10-5	10-5	Closed	Closed	Closed	30.5
O'Neill			10-8	Closed	10-8	10-6	10-6	Closed	Closed	36
Valente			10-8	10-6	10-8	Closed	10-6	Closed	Closed	36
Andover	8,762	31.0 sq. mi.	9-9	9-9	9-9	9-9	9-5	9-5	1-5*	68
Framingham	68,318	25.1 sq. mi.								132
Main			9-9	9-9	9-9	9-9	9-5	9-5	1-5	68
McAuliffe			9-9	9-9	9-9	9-9	9-5	9-5	Closed	64
Wellesley	27,982	10.2 sq. mi.								127
Main			9-9	9-9	9-9	9-9	9-6	9-5	1-5*	69
Hills			Closed	10-8	10-5	10-8	10-5	10-5*	Closed	44
Fells (Sept.-June)			Closed	9-noon	Closed	Closed	9-noon	9-5	Closed	14
Fells (July-Aug)			Closed	9-noon	1-5	1-5	9-noon	Closed	Closed	

*Closed during July and August

Given the close proximity of the Main Library and the Coolidge Corner branch, and the extensive overlap in population density within a one-mile radius, reduction of some duplicated hours would seem to cause only minimal service reductions to residents. The exact savings cannot be determined without delineating specific schedule changes, a policy that is governed by the Library Trustees.

4. Shifting Sunday employees to not incur overtime

The budget request for FY 2015 includes \$50,000 for overtime pay for employees who work more than 37 hours per week. In accordance with the union contract, the regular work week for library employees hired prior to

July 1, 2002 is defined as Monday to Saturday, entitling them to overtime pay if scheduled to work on Sunday. The regular work week for employees hired after July 1, 2002 is defined as Monday to Sunday, precluding the automatic payment of overtime for Sunday hours. On a typical Sunday, approximately one-third of the fifteen employees scheduled earn overtime pay. Because the contract requires that overtime be assigned on an equal and impartial basis, the potential for actual savings is not clear. Management should continue to monitor overtime shifts to the extent possible under contract guidelines.

Information Technology

Background

The Information Technology Department (“IT Department”) maintains and oversees the network for 29 locations in the Town, which span all public agencies, including libraries, public safety, the cemeteries, DPW, and the PSB. The Department has a total of 17 FTE (16 employees and one contractor). They are organized in a tripartite structure, including application (seven FTEs who handle all enterprise software, students management systems and more), networking (three FTEs who handle the “plumbing” for 29 locations throughout town), and the Town/PSB Help Desk (one FTE Manager and four FTEs, together with a contractor). The PSB pay for the Help Desk. In addition to these three functional groups, there is one FTE administrative position.

The Strategic Plan for Information Technology (2002) established the Chief Information Officer (“CIO”) as the Town and PSB hub for strategy, technology alignment, implementation planning and other significant governance roles. Current priorities include increasing online transactions, improving communications and notifications, and expanding access to performance management. The BrookOnline platform is central to these priorities.

The IT Department ensures compatibility of equipment purchases and strategic alignment. The CIO acts as the chair of the Information Management Governance Committee, the group of senior Town department heads which determines the role, needs and goals of technology within the Town. As a result of the consolidation of open positions in DPW and the IT Department in 2009, the IT Department has an MOU with the DPW for one of its application support staff. It also has an MOU with the PSB system, but coordination and strategy with the Superintendent and the Education Technology staff is limited primarily to the network and infrastructure.

The 2009 Efficiency Initiative Committee reports underscored a Town-wide drive to establish Brookline public Wi-Fi as a cost-saving measure. That effort terminated in 2013 because the business model became untenable and the vendor closed down. The EIC recommendation to outsource the Mac Help Desk has not been accomplished, nor has the proposal to fully centralize and consolidate the IT Department function.

However, coordination between the IT Department and the BPD and the BFD has improved considerably. Both the BFD and the BPD have strong information technology leadership and function on a lean basis. There is clarity on information technology governance and also in terms of the respective roles of departmental and IT Department staff. The MOUs have been crafted with an eye toward ensuring the compatibility of equipment purchases as well as strategic alignment. Chief Ford has made electronic workflow and the improvement of back office reporting top priorities for the BFD. Similarly, Chief O’Leary sees the BPD as ahead of the curve on information technology. The BPD drives the strategy and works to ensure compliance with the many federal, state and local mandates on information technology and management. The CIO maintains a strong relationship and controls the infrastructure for the Department.

Identified Options

1. Increase Training

Administrative staff in public service is moving from clerical professionals to knowledge workers. In online environments where residents and customers input their own data or conduct their own transactions, we need a plan for a responsive public service workforce. Greater productivity could likely be gained by developing and executing on a plan to enhance the level of technology training for administrative positions. Such an action will likely lead to additional savings by allowing the Town to reduce such administrative positions over a multi-year period. Fewer people coming into the buildings for services or to complete transactions means that some staff can be reduced. It may also lead to expanded services by redirecting some existing administrative positions to other work.

To achieve a more highly trained workforce, the Town should:

- survey administrative and other staff across Brookline agencies and the PSB to understand the existing level of technology and basic computer skills, educational backgrounds and other information pertinent to crafting a plan that targets training;
- identify resources to drive a coordinated effort from the IT Department by in-house or outsourced personnel;
- plan to facilitate possible staff reassignments or new tasks;
- identify basic online tests for new hires, as well as training program(s) to improve staff members’ ability to use the Town’s technology resources;
- plan to secure future agency leadership that advances considerable technology skills.

2. Outsource the Help Desk fully or partially

Building on the 2001 Town Strategic Plan mandate to consolidate technology, and the 2009 Efficiency Committee report, the Subcommittee urges greater consolidation of the Help Desk through a uniform support model that includes outsourcing PSB user support. As noted above, the Town/PSB Help Desk consists of five FTEs (one FTE Manager and four staff FTEs) who work together with a full-time contractor. Potential savings would accrue to the PSB budget where the Help Desk is lodged.

The greatest demand for Mac Help Desk support is during equipment switchovers. With increased technology device purchases under consideration by the Town and the PSB, switchover timing will be even more intensive (and require more summertime help). Although the PSB run thousands of Mac devices, the new technology plan aims to be device neutral. The Town tends to use PC equipment but its mobile devices increasingly vary. For these reasons the Subcommittee believes the Mac Help Desk and break/fix support staff should be reduced and the functions put out for bid as it was after the 2009 EIC report. Revisiting the process with more tightly defined specifications should produce a more cost effective response and the potential to eliminate one or two positions under an outsourcing model.

3. Clarify information technology governance

As delineated in the 2002 Strategy for Information Technology and the 2009 Efficiency Committee report, consolidated governance of technology has significant value in better planning and lower operational, implementation and long-term replacement costs. Poor planning and procurement results in a disservice to residents, customers, teachers, administrators and students who increasingly rely on a growing range of technological innovation.

The IT Department has established MOUs with DPW, the BFD and the BPD with the goal of ensuring compatibility of equipment purchases and strategic alignment. Similarly, there should be an MOU between the Building Department and the IT Department to foster improvements such as better key card, energy management, and imaging systems in buildings.

Although an MOU exists between IT Department and the PSB, it is less focused than the ones with the Town departments and achieves significantly less coordination. As the current OSC process has shown, the IT Department's involvement with the networking and infrastructure requirements of the PSB technology plan has resulted in significant savings for the PSB. This relationship needs to be further defined and strengthened in a revised MOU which clearly defines the roles of Town and PSB staff with regard to information technology strategy, planning, and implementation.

Health and Human Services

Background

The Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”) provides a range of environmental, community, and clinical health services to monitor and improve the health status and quality of life of persons who live and/or work in Brookline. It is staffed by 12 full-time and four part-time employees, for a total of 14.94 FTEs. Staff are supplemented by 12 grant-funded full-and part-time positions and interns. One full-time staff position was eliminated in FY 2010 as recommended by the Efficiency Initiative Committee report completed in January, 2009. The Department’s annual budget of \$1.3 million represents less than 0.6% of the Town’s operating expenses. In addition to Town funds, HHS obtains approximately \$250,000 in grants annually.

Service is provided through the following sub-programs:

- Environmental Health services, most of which are State-mandated, include licensing and inspection programs, pest control, asbestos removal, hazardous waste, and tobacco control.
- Child Health focuses on immunization and prevention of infectious disease outbreaks, is the liaison with the PSB on health matters, and monitors group day care centers.
- Community Health provides educational, clinical, and screening services with a focus on early disease detection and prevention measures.
- Mental Health services, provided through the Brookline Community Mental Health Center with some support from the Town, include counseling, crisis intervention, substance abuse, violence prevention, housing and case management, social service, and educational interventions.
- Substance Abuse/Violence Prevention/Youth provides a range of counseling, prevention education, and peer leadership trainings designed to reduce substance abuse and violence among Brookline youth.
- Human Relations/Human Services personnel staff the Women’s Commission, Commission for the Disabled, and Human Relations Youth Resources Commission, assist residents with health insurance and SNAP (food stamp) applications, and are involved in domestic violence prevention.

Because the majority of services provided by HHS are mandated by State or Federal regulation, the Subcommittee limited its focus to the three discretionary items identified by Alan Balsam, the HHS Director.

Identified Options

1. Reduce or eliminate grant to the Brookline Community Mental Health Center

Mental health services in Brookline are provided by the Brookline Community Mental Health Center (“BCMHC”), a private non-profit organization funded through service fees, philanthropy, and state and local grants. The largest discretionary item in the HHS budget is a \$167,000 grant to BCMHC to provide in-home outreach and crisis intervention services to Town residents. An additional grant to BCMHC from the PSB supports the reintegration into PSB of children who have been absent from school because of mental health or behavioral problems.

Of the 14 Boston area Towns surveyed, five (Framingham, Lexington, Needham, Newton, and Wellesley) provide financial support to the mental health centers in their catchment areas which are part of larger service networks and not as community specific as BCMHC. Cambridge does not provide direct support, but assists with fundraising. Belmont, Dedham, Medford, Natick, and Somerville provide no support. Boston, Watertown and Waltham did not respond.

Because outreach and crisis services are not reimbursable through third party fees (private health insurance, Medicaid, Medicare), reduction or elimination of the HHS grant would result in the reduction or elimination of these services. BCMHC provides approximately 7,800 hours of outreach and crisis services each year, including instances of domestic violence.

2. Reduce or eliminate Community Health Manager position

This position is partially funded by grants to the Department, so the potential savings are quite small (\$37,000 in salary and related benefits). The full impact of service reduction could not be determined by the Subcommittee.

3. Eliminate day care inspection services

Brookline employs two part-time staff who are not eligible for benefits to conduct semi-annual inspections of a growing number of privately run early child care facilities in the Town. All other municipalities in Massachusetts have ceded this function to the State. Elimination of the two positions would result in savings of \$28,000. However, there would be a 75% reduction in inspections because the State only inspects each site once every two years. There would also likely be a substantial decrease in response time to and resolution of complaints.

Recreation Department

Background

The Recreation Department provides indoor and outdoor recreational activities for children, youth, and adults. It operates the Town golf course which is fully funded by the Golf Enterprise Fund. The Recreation Department Revolving Fund allows other programs to be operated on a self-supporting basis. These include activities at the Soule Center, Soule Gym, Kirrane Skating Rink, Environmental Education Center, Kirrane Aquatics Center, Eliot Center, Tappan Facility, and outdoor facilities and leagues. The Town provides approximately \$1 million to cover the Department's administrative structure (\$584,000) and operation of the swimming pool (\$422,000).

Cost Recovery

The goal of cost recovery is to maximize the use of user fees instead of tax dollars to support program services, reducing the need for Town subsidy. In 2009, the Recreation Department began implementation of a tiered model for its fee structure, which assigns a "community benefit" level to each program. Those services which benefit the wider community receive more Town subsidy, and have a smaller cost recovery component. Those services which are deemed more individual in nature receive less of a Town subsidy and have a larger cost recovery component. The model includes market factors as part of the overall pricing strategy.

Not all the pool subsidy is subject to cost recovery because of hours allocated to the PSB for which no fees are charged. These hours are offset by Recreation Department use of school gyms and other facilities for some of their programs. Based on statistics provided by the Recreation Department, roughly 9% of the pool subsidy is not recoverable through fees because of PSB use. Summer camp accounts for approximately 4% of pool usage, and the remaining 87% is for Aquatic Center programs.

Using these calculations, and assuming a pro-rated allocation of administrative costs results in the calculation of fully allocated costs shown below. Other models for allocating administrative costs may be more applicable, based on the pyramid methodology and price elasticity of each program. The Department should work with the Deputy Town Administrator to determine the full extent to which cost recovery is feasible and develop a timeline for achieving it.

Recreation Revolving Fund Programs

Program	Revenue	Expense	Profit (Loss)	% of Total Expenses	Potential Admin Cost Recovery	Potential Pool Cost Recovery	Revenue Increase Needed
Soule Ctr	787,184	773,435	13,749	28.2%	164,749		20.9%
Soule Gym	69,796	47,804	21,992	1.7%	10,183		14.6%
Environ Ctr	52,589	103,369	(50,780)	3.8%	22,019		41.9%
Aquatic	542,684	420,563	122,121	15.3%	89,584	367,117	84.2%
Skating Rink	141,086	257,508	(116,422)	9.4%	54,852		38.9%
Tappan St. Gym	168,702	219,520	(50,818)	8.0%	46,760		27.7%
Outdoor Rec	624,270	468,692	155,578	17.1%	99,836	16,879	18.7%
Eliot Rec	88,078	195,193	(107,115)	7.1%	41,578		47.2%
Off Site	36,970	93,158	(56,188)	3.4%	19,844		53.7%
Outdoor Athletics	230,991	163,109	67,882	5.9%	34,744		15.0%
	<u>2,742,350</u>	<u>2,742,351</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>584,146</u>	<u>383,996</u>	

Assumes all programs have equal capacity for additional revenue. Actual price elasticity needs to be established.

Municipal Budget Considerations

In addition to specific programmatic efficiencies and service cuts, the Town could consider reducing the overall municipal budget by a specific dollar amount or percentage, leaving it to the Town Administrator, working in conjunction with the department heads, to make the most appropriate budget choices. Excluding benefits and reserve funds, the sum of the municipal departmental budgets is \$64,672,028, so even small reductions would be significant.

Civil Service Reform

Significant savings could be realized with reforms to civil service for hiring and promotion. Converting management positions to non-civil service positions through collective bargaining may also lead to better management practices.

Currently, the Town is subject to civil service rules for all hiring and promotions. The rules require hiring from a list based primarily on scores from a written examination, diminishing the Town’s overall flexibility and management discretion. In addition, civil service disciplinary protections may not be appropriate to all or some managerial positions.

There is a question as to whether union membership for ranking officers and/or senior staff, whose primary job responsibility is to supervise and motivate subordinate personnel, creates an inherent management conflict.

Addressing civil service and union membership for supervisors is a time-consuming and contentious process, which goes outside the purpose of the OSC. As a result, the Subcommittee limits itself to underscoring these outdated restrictions on the Town’s management rights and responsibilities.